

INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Course Held at the Party School of the KPOe in Mödling, Lower Austria

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I. The School and its Program

1. Location:

The course was held in the building of the Landespartei-schule für Niederösterreich on Jasonirgottstrasse in Mödling (the building which houses also the Bezirksleitung for Mödling)

2. Purpose of the Course:

The course was designed to familiarize young Party functionaries with the aims of the KPOe, to prepare for building Party cadres and to train functionaries for future Party work.

3. KPOe Speakers at the Course:

The speakers listed below, who lectured at the course, were well-schooled Communists and excellent teachers with marked rhetorical abilities.

- Fein; an Austrian Jew about 40 years old, a member of the KPOe since 1934 who spent eleven years in various concentration camps. He is reportedly the director of the school.
- Lande; a 35-year old woman, a member of the Lower Austrian Landesleitung of the Communist Party.*
- Fenz; about 30 to 32 years of age, a member of the Lower Austrian Landesleitung of the KPOe.
- Fischer, Dr. Walter; about 55 years old, brother of Nationalrat Ernst Fischer. Walter Fischer has been interned in several concentration camps. He is a specialist on peasant affairs.
- Deubel; about 32 to 35 years old, a member of the Lower Austrian Landesleitung of the KPOe.
- Lauscher, Fritz; about 45 years old, brother of municipal councilman Lauscher,

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a member of the Lower Austrian Landesleitung of the KPÖ. He is a specialist in trade union matters.

- g. Pohl; a woman of about 40 to 45 years of age, a member of the Lower Austrian Landesleitung of the KPÖ.
- h. Muri; about 30 years of age, District Secretary in Mödling, at one time the director of this school.
- i. Altschul; about 25 to 28 years of age, a member of the Lower Austrian Landesleitung of the KPÖ.
- j. Honner, Franz; Nationalrat and specialist in youth matters.

4. Students Attending the Course:

Twenty-two KPÖ members and functionaries from various parts of Austria attended the course. Almost half of these were USIA employees with "fairly high standing in the lower echelons of the KPÖ". The remainder consisted of youth and labor organizers and various minor functionaries.

5. The Daily Program:

0600 reveille

0700 breakfast

0730-1000 lecture

1000-1015 second breakfast

1015-1145 study period

1200-1400 lunch and a noonday break

1400-1600 group work

1600-1700 break and tea

1700-1900 study period followed by supper

2200 lights out

6. Organization of the Course:

The 22 students were organized into four working groups. Each of these groups elected a leader. The mornings were devoted to lectures and study periods, while in the afternoon the lectures of the morning were discussed under the direction of Fein. In the evening the entire day's work was discussed, and about two hours were devoted to study, again under the direction of Fein. During the breaks and free periods, games (usually volley-ball) were organized. After evening studies there was group singing as well as work on posters. Saturday afternoons were devoted to peddling copies of the "Volksstimme". Saturday afternoons and Sundays were free. Participants could also leave the school after supper until 2200 hours.

7. General Impressions:

Source was favorably impressed with the course. He states that there was a marked absence of barrack-room discipline, although personal habits and punctuality were closely observed. During the lectures "free" discussion was encouraged, and often students were called upon to make impromptu political speeches. The reading room, besides being well stocked with Communist newspapers and literature, offered a good selection of all Austrian newspapers, including the "Arbeiterzeitung", the "Neues Österreich", the "Wiener Kurier", and "Die Presse". The course of studies was well organized and obviously put together by experienced men. The emphasis was on strengthening the fighting spirit in new Party members. Source states that in general his group was enthusiastic

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and praised the school work and leadership; there was little criticism. The more indoctrinated Communists attending the course complained that it was too general and superficial for the serious students. Little time was spent on discussion of the present-day political scene.

II. Lectures

1. The course consisted of seventeen lectures, parts of which are summarized below. In connection with the subjects covered, the following reading was recommended or assigned:

"Tag und Ziel"

"What is Capitalism?"

"What is Imperialism?"

"Colonial Crises"

"Vertrauensmann" (described by source as "a paper for the functionaries of Lower Austria")

2. Pohl, who lectured on the Soviet Union and the steps to be taken in passing from Socialism to Communism, taught that a) the fourth Five Year Plan is to be completed in 1951, b) production in the USSR must be higher per capita than in the United States, c) "first bread will be free, followed by meat, other foodstuffs, clothing, etc.", d) secondary education, now compulsory in cities, will be required also in rural areas in 1951, because of the increased mechanization of the agricultural industries, e) all classes will disappear.
3. Fein quoted Lenin's definition of Imperialism as the last stage of Capitalism, and explained that "the general crises of Capitalism are increasing" because of the following factors: the recovery and increased strength of the USSR since the war; the collapse of the Imperialist (Axis) powers; the weakness of England and France; the growth of Communist Parties throughout the world; the freedom movement taking place in the colonial countries; the peace movement which will lead to a split between Communism and Imperialism.
4. Deubel and Muri discussed political parties in Austria, terming the VdU (League of Independents) the catch-all for the rebirth of Fascism, describing the SPOe (Socialist Party) as the agent of foreign Imperialists in Austria, claiming that in the OeVP (People's Party) the pace is set by the Facist wing, and stating that all parties in Austria are Imperialist except for the KPOe (Austrian Communist Party). The latter, Deubel explained, "is not a Russian party, but is proud of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union". The aims of the Communist Party were cited as follows:
 - a. To destroy opportunistic elements.
 - b. To heal the cleft in the working class (which was split not by the Communist Party but by opportunism within the ranks).
 - c. To bring about the fall of Capitalism. This goal cannot be achieved by the ballot; revolution must take place. "Reserves in the struggle: the peasants, the colonial freedom fighters and the coordination of all Communist Parties with Moscow".
5. Fein, in another lecture, cited the following factors which cause the KPOe to remain small:
 - a. competition of the SPOe, whose deeds are reactionary in spite of radical words.
 - b. left-wing opportunists.

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- c. mistakes of the Party, in taking part in elections, in withdrawal from the trade unions and in self-imposed isolation.
 - d. two groups within the Party: that of Tomann and that of Frei (sic).
6. Penz's lecture was a discussion of state and communal politics, where the politics of the Party are applied to conditions existing in the provinces and municipalities. Penz pointed out the great opportunities for the class struggle in the municipal councils, where the Party must assume leadership. He stated also that certain gains for the working class could be achieved in a bourgeois state.
 7. Lecturing on peasant politics, Dr. Fischer noted the over-taxation of the small farmer, "damage caused by the middle man", distribution crises and the class differences in rural areas. He stated, as the Communist point of view, that the workers in the city must win over the small and middle farmers to the class struggle against Capitalism, "kolkhoz fear" among the farmers must be combatted and all Communists must assist the "Bund der Kleinen Landwirte", an organization for the perpetuation of Marxism among farmers.
 8. As weaknesses in the Party organization, Fein named the general low level of Party functionaries (sic), organization along Social Democratic lines and poor routine work in peddling newspapers, Party literature, etc. Fein stressed the importance of good organization in the factory.
 9. Lauscher spoke on trade unions, important chiefly as instruments for the removal of the wage system. Among the goals of Communist Party trade union politics he named:
 - a. wage increases, to be demanded in the various branches of industry. Demands for an overall wage increase are not so forceful.
 - b. an intensified fight against the white-washing of the Socialist "price-swindle".

Although it supported the formation of the Austrian Trade Union Federation, the Party has erred, said Lauscher, in its tendency to withdraw from the trade unions and to under-estimate the importance of trade union work. However, factory councilmen, who are not trade union functionaries, must not be Party treasurers. The basis of the Communist trade union work must be knowledge of standing orders and collective contracts of the factories as well as "collaboration with the factions".
 10. In his lecture on youth Altschul stated that the Party is responsible for both the FOeJ (Free Austrian Youth) and the Junge Garde, but has no interest in non-political youth organizations. The Central Committee has criticized the youth leadership for failure to carry out the Party line. All members of the FOeJ and Junge Garde must be won over to the Party; young cadres are to be given responsibility as soon as possible.
 11. According to Dr. Fischer, a People's Democracy in Austria is "only a question of the next few years". Fein stated specifically that "through the national anti-Fascist and anti-Imperialist struggle for freedom, the People's Democracy will be established in Austria", and that its establishment will require:
 - a. workers' unity.
 - b. federation with the peasants.
 - c. a national movement.

Fein described a People's Democracy as "the path to Socialism during the time of supremacy of the progressive camp over the powers of reaction and during the time in which the Soviet Union has become a decisive world power". The Soviet Union gives financial and military assistance to such countries. (Yugoslavia is not a People's Democracy since, by definition, the latter stands for economic collaboration and friendship with the Soviet Union.)

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12. Nationalrat Honner spoke on the political situation, saying that "Lenin's will and Stalin's oath is, in foreign affairs, to prohibit the unity of the enemies of the Soviet Union and to halt the Imperialists. To date, the Imperialists have been halted." With regard to Korea, Honner stated that isolationism was growing in the United States, that the Congress of the DDR and the peace movement had prevented American use of the atomic bomb, and that the Soviet Union had shown its desire for peace. Honner added that 120,000 copies of "The Truth about Korea" has been sold, and another 100,000 copies ordered.
13. Honner predicted that there would be between 300,000 and 400,000 unemployed in Austria during the winter of 1950-1951, when even USIA industries would be forced to dismiss personnel. He stated that the fourth wage and price pact was in view, and that there would be currency changes in Austria. The Austrian state treaty would not be signed, Honner explained, until "after clarification of the world situation".

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[] Comment: Probably Dr. Genia []

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